

- 9 -

CLAIMS

1. A catapult, in particular for launching a parachutist, characterized in that it comprises a flexible or articulated cradle containing the parachutist and connected to two fast runs, passing over two pulleys placed high up, at least one pulley block supporting a counterweight, the parachutist being catapulted into the air when the catapult is released and the counterweight falls.
2. The catapult as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the counterweight is held by two pulley blocks, the fast runs of the pulley blocks being connected to the cradle.
3. The catapult as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the ratio of the pulley block or blocks is approximately 10.
4. The catapult as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the body of the parachutist is substantially perpendicular to the direction of movement of the gondola.
5. The catapult as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the fast runs are held in tension before the catapult is released.
6. The catapult as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the catapult is stopped by stopping the fall of the counterweight, in particular by making contact with the ground.
7. The catapult as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the travel of the counterweight is approximately 5 meters.

8. The catapult as claimed in claim 1, characterized
in that the cables used for producing the fast
runs are made of material with a mass per unit
5 length that is less than that of steel.

9. A catapult, in particular for launching a
parachutist, characterized in that it comprises a
flexible or articulated cradle for containing a
10 load to be ejected, in particular a parachutist,
coupled to two runs of flexible line, passing over
two pulleys placed high up, connected to at least
one exit of a means with a travel multiplier
factor, the entrance of the multiplier means being
15 controlled by the fall of a counterweight whose
mass is selected to be large enough for the
acceleration transmitted to the load to be a
multiple of the acceleration due to gravity, the
load being catapulted into the air when the
20 catapult is released and the counterweight falls.